

2010 National and State Schools of Character Awards



NATIONAL SCHOOLS
OF CHARACTER



STATE SCHOOLS
OF CHARACTER

National and State Schools of Character Awards 2010 Application Guidelines

Sponsored by the Character Education Partnership and Participating State Schools of Character Sponsors

Purpose of the National and State Schools of Character Awards Program

The purpose of both the National and State Schools of Character awards is to identify, honor, and showcase exemplars in character education and facilitate their leadership in mentoring others. The goal of the national program is to provide a variety of models of comprehensive, quality character education, representing America's diverse educational system.

National Awards

Every year, the Character Education Partnership (CEP) names approximately 10 public and private schools and districts (K-12) as National Schools of Character (NSOC) for their outstanding work in character education. CEP writes articles about the NSOC and showcases them on the CEP website. Winners receive national and local press coverage and have the right to use the NSOC awards name and logo. CEP will honor the 2010 National Schools of Character winners with a banner and a certificate at CEP's National Forum on Character Education in October 2010 in San Francisco.

Expectations of NSOC Award Winners

National award winners receive a grant from CEP to fulfill their role as ambassadors of character education. They present at CEP's National Forum and provide staff development and mentoring for other educators.

Criteria for NSOC

From the ever-increasing pool of top-rated schools and districts, CEP will select distinctive models that offer demographic variety in areas such as geographic location, socioeconomic status, and grade level.

State Awards

State sponsors from more than half the states in the U.S. give State Schools of Character (SSOC) awards to schools and districts within their states. State sponsors send the state's best applicants on to the National Schools of Character competition. The number of awards each state gives varies from state to state as does the award itself. Some states give certificates, some give banners. Some have site visits, most do

Call (1-800) 988-8081 or (202) 296-7743 for further information.

These application guidelines are available on the CEP website at www.character.org/nsoc.



Leading a National Call to Character

Character Education Partnership
1025 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1011, Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 800-988-8081 or 202-296-7743 Fax: 202-296-7779
www.character.org E-mail: nsoc@character.org

"The application process has been a learning experience.... It is both challenging and validating."

PRIDE Team, Waterloo Middle School

not. They all hold celebrations for their SSOC, but the forms they take are varied and unique. Some celebrate at the school level with the student body participating. Others hold their celebrations at state houses, historic sites, during conferences, and even at TV stations and national sporting events. As state winners, SSOC serve as models within their states where they can share best practices and develop a state-level mentoring network among educators. CEP and state sponsors honor SSOC winners on their websites.

Application Submission

If you are from a state participating in the NSOC/SSOC awards program, you send your application to your state sponsor. Page 5 of these guidelines lists the participating states. Click on the state name to link to the sponsor's webpage on CEP's website. There you will find the sponsor's mailing address and a link to their website for additional information. If your state is not participating, you send your application to CEP. The address is on page 1 of these guidelines.

Scoring Criteria

CEP and state reviewers screen applications using CEP's [Character Education Quality Standards](#), a scoring rubric based on CEP's [Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education](#). In evaluating school district applications, reviewers also use [Guidelines for School Districts in Fostering Character Education](#). All documents can be viewed and printed from CEP's website.

Timeline

All applicants must mail their applications by December 1. From December to January, state sponsors and CEP staff review the applications. In January, state sponsors send status letters to all state applicants and forward their highest scoring applications to the national competition. In February, CEP selects the finalists. In March, CEP notifies state nominees and applicants from non-participating states of their status. In March and April, CEP sends site visitors to visit the finalists. In May, a Blue Ribbon Panel of experts in social-emotional development and character education selects the National Schools of Character.

Benefits for All Applicants

The process of completing the application process is a rich opportunity to conduct a thorough self-assessment. All applicants receive detailed feedback in the form of a [Character Education Quality Standards](#) score sheet that includes a quantitative score and written feedback. Applicants also

receive a subscription to *E-ssential Character*, CEP's electronic newsletter. CEP gives applicants an additional month to apply for a Promising Practices award for a specific activity or strategy described in their application, and CEP gives their applications special consideration.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the 2010 awards, a school must have been engaged in character education for a minimum of three full years, starting no later than December 2006. Districts need to have been engaged in character education for a minimum of four full years, starting no later than December 2005. Smaller administrative units that maintain a separate identity within a large district may apply in the district category, e.g., a school pyramid or cluster. CEP suggests that schools and their districts not apply the same year to avoid competing with one another. Previous National Schools of Character are ineligible to apply.

Application Process

The NSOC application consists of the following:

- An **Application Cover Sheet** created online at CEP's website by entering information about your school or district.
- A page that describes the **Demographics** of your students and faculty and other **Application Information**.
- A 7-page **Narrative** that explains how your school's character education initiative exemplifies the *Eleven Principles*. (Districts may submit up to 10 pages.)
- Up to a 15-page **Portfolio** that provides supporting evidence for the Narrative. (Districts may submit up to 20 pages.)
- A **Self-Assessment Score Sheet** using the *Quality Standards* that shows the results of your school's or district's self-assessment.

Mail four copies of the completed application, assembled in the order outlined above, by **December 1, 2009**. That is the postmark date, not the arrival date. More detailed information about each piece of the application follows.

Application Cover Sheet

Begin the application process by going to the CEP website (www.character.org/nsocapplicationprocess) to create your Application Cover Sheet. Doing so will give CEP and state sponsors valuable information that will enable us to keep track of your application and communicate with you. When you complete the Application Cover Sheet, you will be asked to enter information such as:

- Basic information about your school (or district).
- The month and year your school (or district) began implementing its character education initiative.
- Information about how you heard about this award.

When you hit "submit" after entering all the required information, your monitor will display a one-page Cover Sheet that includes all your entries. Print this document and make it the Cover Sheet of your application.

Demographics and Application Information

In a separate one-page document, please provide the following:

- Student and faculty demographics. Include ethnicity, special needs populations, and other pertinent information
- AYP status: If you have not met AYP, please explain.
- An explanation of who participated in completing the *Character Education Quality Standards* self-assessment
- An explanation of who contributed to completing the application, and the names and titles of those individuals who wrote the application narrative
- Information about any previous NSOC/SSOC applications, the years of submission, and the outcome of these applications. For example, has your school or district ever applied or been named a finalist before? If so, when?

Narrative

The body of your application should be a 7-page narrative (up to 10 pages for districts) that explains how your school's (or district's) character education "story" exemplifies the *Character Education Quality Standards*. Follow these formatting guidelines in your document:

- Use 1-inch margins, 12-point type, Times New Roman font.
- Double space and use only one side of the paper.
- Number the pages 1–7 (1–10 for districts).

Your Narrative should clearly answer the following two questions:

1. What are your character education goals?

On page 1 of the Narrative, define your school's (or district's) view of character education and the values your school community has agreed upon. Describe your philosophical approach, and explain what your character education initiative is trying to accomplish. Explain why you are doing what you are doing.

2. How are you implementing character education?

On pages 2 – 7 of the Narrative, give evidence of your accomplishments in each of the *Character Education Quality Standards*. Note that each of the Standards has three or four "scoring items." While you will receive a score for each item based on the supporting evidence you provide, it is best not to write a separate paragraph for each item. Rather, write a separate paragraph (or more) for each Standard and include specific, illustrative examples that address the scoring items. Keep in mind that to receive a score of 4 on an item, you must show evidence of all the key indicators of exemplary practice described under each scoring item.

Clearly number each section with the number of the Principle you are describing. To use your limited space effectively, only mention information once even if it applies to more than one Principle. It is not necessary to repeat information. Refer to pages in your Portfolio that provide evidence of the Principle, when possible.

The Narrative is your opportunity to supply artifacts that make a persuasive case that your school (or district) has thoughtfully implemented character education and that your initiative

"The self-reflection that schools engage in when completing the application can propel their character education programs to greater implementation with dramatic student outcomes."

Penny Keith, Utah SSOC Coordinator

has had positive and significant results. Be sure to provide specific *qualitative* and *quantitative* evidence to support your argument. Provide full data and analysis from climate surveys and other measurements. Use numbers, not percentages, when reporting changes in student behavior. When describing activities, explain how frequently they occur and how many students they involve. Your Narrative (and Portfolio) should clearly demonstrate that your community has gathered data, reflected upon it, and then acted as needed.

If your school or district has previously applied for the NSOC/SSOC award, be sure to include the changes that you have made since the last application somewhere in your narrative.

Finally, if you are using a commercial program as part of your initiative, be sure to include a brief explanation of the program.

Portfolio

Submit up to a 15-page Portfolio (up to 20-pages for districts) that amplifies and supports your Narrative. The Portfolio should contain evidence of the effectiveness of your program but should not be an alternative to answering any of the narrative questions. Items included should be actual artifacts—documents that lend evidence to what you have said in your narrative.

Include the following items in your Portfolio if/when possible:

- Data on positive behavioral and academic change
- School climate survey results
- Mission statement, school motto, and behavioral expectations
- Examples of student work or student reflections
- Lesson plans, assignments, or activities that integrate character education into the curriculum
- Articles from school newsletters or local newspapers
- Documentation of staff development, faculty meeting agendas, or character education committee agendas or plans
- Evidence of school-wide community-building events or service-learning activities
- Examples of parent/community involvement

Guidelines for assembling your Portfolio:

- Include a Table of Contents and number the pages.
- Do not exceed 15 pages, not including the Table of Contents.
- Put evidence in order of the *Eleven Principles* and label each page with the Principle(s) addressed.
- Use one side only of 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper.
- Be mindful of how well your pages will reproduce and how clearly readers will be able to see your evidence after it has been copied.
- Do not reduce items to less than 10 pt. (news articles are an exception) or partially cover items with other items.
- Date newspaper articles and other date-sensitive items.
- Do not include photos unless there is some compelling reason they give evidence.
- Do not include original documents, as Portfolios will not be returned.

Self-Assessment Score Sheet

Assemble a group of knowledgeable stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, and students (if appropriate) to assess your character education initiative using the [Character Education Quality Standards](#). Send in a compilation score sheet on which you have averaged your stakeholders' scores. Make this score sheet the last page in your application. An Excel score sheet is available for your use on the NSOC application page of the CEP website (<http://www.character.org/nsocapplicationprocess>). You can use it to enter and compute your scores in Excel. You can then print your compiled score sheet and submit it with your application. Or, if you prefer, you can simply copy, use, and submit the score sheet page in the *Character Education Quality Standards*.

Helpful Information

See the Helpful Information section on the NSOC application page on CEP's website for some helpful tips on writing a winning application.

Please note that all NSOC/SSOC applications become the property of CEP and may be used for training, promotional, or educational purposes.

Deadline:

Applications must be postmarked by December 1, 2009. The contact person listed on the application will receive an e-mail confirmation from the state sponsor (or from CEP if you are from a non-participating state).

Application Checklist:

Assemble all 26 pages of your completed application in order.

- ☐ **Application Cover Sheet**
- ☐ **Demographics and Application Information** page
- ☐ **7-page Narrative** (10 pages for districts)
- ☐ Portfolio **Table of Contents**
- ☐ **15-page Portfolio** (20 pages for districts)
- ☐ **Self-Assessment Score Sheet**

Make four collated copies and clip each copy together. Do not bind or cover the copies as your application may need to be copied. Send the four copies to your state sponsor if you are from a SSOC participating state or to CEP if you are not from a participating state. See last page of these guidelines for a link to the mailing addresses.

Promising Practices Awards

CEP gives annual Promising Practices awards in character education for *unique* and *specific* exemplary practices. Selected schools and districts receive an award certificate at the Promising Practices Awards Ceremony at the CEP Forum. In addition, a description of their winning practice appears on CEP's website. Promising Practices applications must be submitted online by March 15, 2010. (See separate [Promising Practices award application](#).)

Applications due ... December 1, 2009

SSOC Participating States

Click on your state's name to see where to mail your application and to click on the state sponsor's website for additional information.



California

Center for Youth
Citizenship
Christina Roper
Program Coordinator
916-228-2322
croper@youthcitizenship.org



Colorado

Foundation for Character
Development
Jim Olmstead
Director of Strategic
Partnerships
303-410-1522
jimolm@comcast.net



Florida

The Golden Rule
Foundation
Claudia Hunter
Character Education
Consultant
407-647-4047
claudia@DoUntoOthers.net



Georgia

Kennesaw State
University
Connie Lane
Grants Administrator
678-797-2012
clane@kennesaw.edu



Illinois

University of Illinois
Extension
Judy Taylor
Youth Development
Educator
217-782-6515
jmtaylor@illinois.edu



Indiana

Indiana Department of Education
Andrew Conway
317-232-9105
aconway@doe.in.gov



Iowa

Institute for Character
Development at Drake
University
Eric Martin
Training & Outreach
Director
515-271-1995
eric.martin@drake.edu



Kansas

Kansas State Department
of Education
Sue Kidd
Kansas Schools of
Character Project
Coordinator
785-863-3425
skidd.kschared@gmail.com



Kentucky

Character Council of
Greater Cincinnati &
Northern Kentucky
Mary Andres Russell
513-467-0170
mrussell@charactercincinnati.org



Louisiana

LSU AgCenter 4-H
Development
Kimberly Jones
225-578-2196
kyjones@agcenter.lsu.edu



Maryland

Maryland Center for
Character Education
Mark Beck
410-822-6481
mb4833@aol.com

Massachusetts

Hudson Public School
District, CAEC at BU, and
the MDESE
Mary McCarthy
978-567-6130
mmccarthy@hudson.k12.ma.us



Michigan

Department of Education
Pat Tibbetts
248-765-5938
pattibbetts@sbcglobal.net



Minnesota

Center for Academic
Excellence
Joyce Swenson
507-389-2461
jswenson@mncae.org



Missouri

CHARACTERplus
Suzy Ward
314-692-9711
sward@csd.org



New Jersey

Center for Social and
Character Development
at Rutgers University and
the NJ DOE
Dr. Phil Brown, Director
732-445-7504, ext. 37
pmbrown@rci.rutgers.edu



New York

Academy for Character
Education at the Sage
Colleges
Dr. Phil Fusco
518-244-2336
docwasue@aol.com
philipfusco@aol.com



North Carolina

North Carolina
Department of Public
Instruction
Deborah Prickett
919-807-3949
dprickett@dpi.state.nc.us



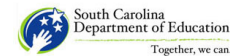
Ohio

Ohio Partners in
Character Education,
ODOE and Ohio Better
Business Bureaus
Dr. Lucy Frontera
Executive Director
614-893-9971
frontera@pipeline.com



Pennsylvania

Center for Leadership
and Ethics
Dr. Len Marrella
Director
610-478-3000
lenmarrella@yahoo.com



South Carolina

Department of Education
Gerry Weaver
803-734-4804
gmweaver@ed.sc.gov



South Dakota

Technology and
Innovation in Education
(TIE)
Londa Richter
Dakota Character Project
Manager
605-394-1876
lrichter@tie.net



Texas

Houston ISD, Dallas ISC
and Klein ISD
Karen Washington
713-556-7180
kwashin2@houstonisd.org



Utah

The Eunice Kennedy
Shriver National Center
for Community of Caring
at the
University of Utah
Penny Keith
Professional
Development Director
801-587-8990
pkeith@communityofcaring.org

Virginia

School of Education
Regent University
Dr. Helen Stiff-Williams
804-739-7852
stiff.williams@comcast.net



Washington

Leadership Innovations
Team (LIT), Whitworth
University, and WSASCD
Heather Knight
Co-President, LIT
360-490-9989
heather@leadershipinnovationsteam.com

West Virginia

College of Education and
Human Services
Marshall University
Dr. Michael Corrigan
304-696-2961
corrigan@marshall.edu



Wisconsin

Wisconsin Character
Education Partnership
Elaine Gehring
414-899-8640
gehring_lafave@yahoo.com